

Peelhill Farm: a possible Late Bronze Age weapon sacrifice in Lanarkshire

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Catalogue of the Peelhill Farm hoard

Accession number: A.1964.41.a

Classification: Sword

Length: 516 mm (grip: 185 mm, blade: 105 mm, tip: 226 mm)

Width: 36 mm (terminal), 47 mm (shoulder), 41 mm (blade maximum)

Weight: 477 g (hilt: 169 g, upper blade and hilt: 267 g, mid-blade: 99 g, lower blade and tip: 211 g)

Description: Complete sword in three refitting pieces.

The blade is bent (c. 120 degrees) and broken. The lower fracture shows a consistent patina and corrosion and is therefore ancient. No associated tool marks can be detected, so that the sword was most likely deformed by hand without applying heat until it broke, leaving some very minor cracking on the mid-blade fragment on the interior of the bend. The upper fracture is recent, revealing a porous casting. It probably resulted from being struck by a plough or similar heavy machinery, as indicated by an oval depression and material loss on one side of the sword which extends across both the hilt piece and the mid-blade fragment. When refitted this break has an orientation in the opposite direction to the main bend. This fracture happened while cold.

The grip shows an omega-shaped hilt mark. It has two rivet holes in each shoulder and three in the tang, though only two were broken through. All rivets are lost, possibly suggesting a removal of the organic parts before deposition. There is no ricasso notch. The cutting edges were hammered, but not stepped. The cold hardening appears to be more intense towards the rounded and corroded tip. Traces of use, i. e. small nicks, can be identified on both sides of the lower blade.

Accession number: A.1964.41.aa

Classification: Spearhead

Length: 160 mm (upper blade fragment: 132 mm, blade wing fragment: 85 mm)

Width: 45 mm

Diameter socket (external): -

Weight: 125 g (upper blade fragment: 83 g, blade wing fragment: 41 g)

Description: Blade of a spearhead broken in two refitting pieces. Lower part missing.

Significant traces of burning, which caused distortion and warping.

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Accession number: A.1964.41.ab

Classification: Spearhead

Length: 92 mm

Width: 43 mm

Diameter socket (external): -

Weight: 50 g

Description: Spearhead with socket missing.

Hammered edges. Minor material loss on the edges is recent.

The spearhead was broken across the blade-socket junction. A small circular depression can be identified as a hammer blow and is associated with the fracture.

Accession number: A.1964.41.ac

Classification: Spearhead

Length: 136 mm

Width: 52 mm

Diameter socket (external): -

Weight: 99 g

Description: Spearhead with socket missing.

Significant traces of burning, which caused distortion and warping. The spearhead was broken across the blade-socket junction. The socket cavity is partially crushed, but this is possibly due to burning.

Accession number: A.1964.41.ad

Classification: Spearhead

Length: 64 mm

Width: 39 mm

Diameter socket (external): -

Weight: 43 g (bigger fragment: 37 g, smaller fragment: 6 g)

Description: Mid-blade fragment of a spearhead broken in two refitting pieces. Tip and lower part missing.

Significant traces of burning, which caused distortion and warping. The fracture is ancient.

Accession number: A.1964.41.ae

Classification: Ferrule

Length: 126 mm (upper fragment: 88 mm, lower fragment: 43 mm)

Diameter (external): 15 mm

Weight: 44 g (upper fragment: 29 g; lower fragment: 15 g)

Description: Straight ferrule in two refitting pieces.

Significant traces of burning, which caused distortion and warping. The fracture is ancient.

Accession number: A.1964.41.af

Classification: Ring

Diameter (external): 42 mm

Thickness: 4 mm

Weight: 20 g
Description: Complete ring.

Accession number: A.1964.41.ag
Classification: Ring
Diameter (external): 34 mm
Thickness: 4 mm
Weight: 15 g
Description: Complete ring.

Accession number: A.1964.41.ah
Classification: Ring
Diameter (external): 33 mm
Thickness: 2 mm
Weight: 4 g
Description: Complete ring.

Accession number: A.1964.41.b
Classification: Socketed axehead
Length: 71 mm
Width: 42 mm (cutting edge)
Dimensions of socket (external): 22 x 24 mm
Weight: 84 g
Description: Complete, undecorated axehead. The socket is square with a plain moulding. The cutting edge is crescentic with pointed tips. Casting seams prominent but hammered. No traces of damage.

Accession number: A.1964.41.c
Classification: Spearhead
Length: 171 mm
Width: 47 mm
Diameter socket (external): 28 mm
Weight: 148 g
Description: Complete spearhead.
Hammered edges. Minor material loss on the edges and slight denting may be use-related.

Accession number: A.1964.41.d
Classification: Spearhead
Length: 191 mm
Width: 51 mm
Diameter socket (external): 26 mm
Weight: 188 g
Description: Complete spearhead.

Hammered edges. No traces of damage other than a slight dent and associated bowing on one edge.

Accession number: A.1964.41.e

Classification: Spearhead

Length: 149 mm

Width: 38 mm

Diameter socket (external): 26 mm

Weight: 93 g

Description: Complete spearhead.

Hammered and sharpened edges. No traces of damage or use except for very minor bowing of one edge which could be post-depositional, possibly in connection with recovery.

Accession number: A.1964.41.f

Classification: Spearhead

Length: 202 mm

Width: 49 mm

Diameter socket (external): 29 mm

Weight: 165 g

Description: Complete spearhead.

Significant traces of burning, which caused distortion and warping of about 15-20 degrees just above the middle of the blade with associated cracking on both sides and heat bowing of the edges. The socket is deformed, possibly by squeezing sideways at the rivet holes rather than from above to crush it, creating an irregular oval.

Accession number: A.1964.41.g

Classification: Spearhead

Length: 145 mm

Width: 42 mm

Diameter socket (external): 22 mm

Weight: 79 g

Description: Complete spearhead.

Casting seams present. Traces of burning, and extensive material loss on the edges.

Accession number: A.1964.41.h

Classification: Spearhead

Length: 159 mm (blade and tip fragment: 116 mm, socket fragment: 45 mm)

Width: 41 mm

Diameter socket (external): 27 mm

Weight: 99 g (blade and tip fragment: 67 g, socket fragment: 32 g)

Description: Complete spearhead in two refitting pieces.

Hammered and sharpened edges. The spearhead is broken across the blade-socket junction, which appears to be recent judged by the patina. Some material loss at lower blade.

Accession number: A.1964.41.i (blade) & A.1964.41.i.1 (socket fragments)

Classification: Spearhead

Length: 142mm (blade fragment: 109 mm, socket fragments: 33 mm)

Width: 52 mm

Diameter socket (external): -

Weight: 85 g

Description: Complete spearhead in four refitting pieces with lunate-openings in the hollow-cast blades.

The spearhead is broken across the blade-socket junction, which appears to be recent judged by the patina. Traces of burning, which caused distortion and warping to one wing. About three-quarters of the socket survives in six fragments.

Accession number: A.1964.41.j

Classification: Spearhead

Length: 181mm (blade fragment: 124 mm, socket fragment: 61 mm)

Width: 41 mm

Diameter socket (external): 27 mm

Weight: 128 g (blade fragment: 76 g, socket fragment: 52 g)

Description: Complete spearhead in two refitting pieces with concentric decoration of at least seven ribs around the socket mouth.

Raised, but slightly ground casting seams present. The spearhead is broken across the blade-socket junction, which appears to be recent judged by the patina, revealing a porous casting. Blade edges deteriorated and partly bowed with one edge folded over towards tip on one side. Transverse bending is possibly associated with a crack across the blade towards the tip and a counter crack on the opposite side. A depression directly above the socket may represent a hammer blow and is possibly associated with the fracture. Some of the damage is also consistent with heat warping.

Accession number: A.1964.41.k

Classification: Spearhead

Length: 179 mm (blade fragment: 179 mm, socket fragment: 57 mm)

Width: 39 mm

Diameter socket (external): 26 mm

Weight: 115 g (blade fragment: 75 g, socket fragment: 40 g)

Description: Spearhead in two refitting pieces with larger part of blade missing.

Small casting hollow below one rivet hole in the socket. Hammered and sharpened edges.

The spearhead is broken across the blade-socket junction and there is a perpendicular split up the blade, causing most of one blade wing and bevel to break away. Fragmentation appears to be a combination of modern and ancient fractures.

Accession number: A.1964.41.l

Classification: Spearhead

Length: 141 mm

Width: 52 mm

Diameter socket (external): -

Weight: 106 g

Description: Spearhead with socket missing.

Hammered and sharpened edges. Traces of burning, which caused distortion and warping particularly at the blade-socket junction.

Accession number: A.1964.41.m

Classification: Spearhead

Length: 161 mm

Width: 51 mm

Diameter socket (external): 31 mm

Weight: 185 g

Description: Spearhead with tip missing.

The spearhead is broken across the upper blade, which appears to be ancient judged by the patina, revealing a porous casting. Slight bending towards the break and bowing of the blade edges may be associated with this damage. A steep-sided depression on one side, perpendicular to socket mouth, indicates that the socket has been deliberately struck at least twice. This blow was likely caused by an axe or chisel.

Accession number: A.1964.41.n

Classification: Spearhead

Length: 174 mm

Width: 51 mm

Diameter socket (external): -

Weight: 117 g

Description: Complete spearhead.

Significant traces of burning, which caused distortion and warping with surface bubbled and in places completely melted so the spearhead is flattened.

Accession number: A.1964.41.o

Classification: Spearhead

Length: 96 mm

Width: 37 mm

Diameter socket (external): 28 mm

Weight: 88 g

Description: Complete spearhead.

Significant traces of burning, which caused distortion and warping. The tip has been folded over onto lower blade with part of blade wing broken and missing. Cracking and bowing visible at apex of bend. The tip is fused with the socket, either as a result of burning or corrosion. On the surface organic material is preserved, but these are perhaps recent adhesions.

Accession number: A.1964.41.p

Classification: Spearhead

Length: 151 mm

Width: 48 mm

Diameter socket (external): -

Weight: 94 g

Description: Spearhead in two refitting pieces with part of socket missing.

Recent fracture at socket. Significant traces of burning, which caused distortion and warping particularly at the socket and lower blade edges. Bevel split up on one side.

Accession number: A.1964.41.q

Classification: Spearhead

Length: 147 mm

Width: 41 mm

Diameter socket (external): -

Weight: 102 g

Description: Complete spearhead.

Significant traces of burning, which caused distortion and warping particularly at the socket and blade edges. The socket is completely flattened with cracks up and along the line of the rivet holes, indicating that this could have been cracked before burning.

Accession number: A.1964.41.r

Classification: Spearhead

Length: 151 mm (tip and upper blade fragment: 86 mm, lower blade fragment: 22 mm, socket fragment: 69 mm)

Width: 41 mm

Diameter socket (external): 26 mm

Weight: 85 g (tip and upper blade fragment: 41 g, lower blade fragment: 8 g, socket fragment: 34 g)

Description: Complete spearhead in three refitting pieces.

Sharpened edges. The spearhead is broken below the point of maximum width and across the blade-socket junction, revealing a porous casting. Mixed ancient and recent patina suggesting either fragmentation in antiquity and further material loss since discovery or cracking before deposition and fracturing upon recovery. The spearhead is bent across the middle of the blade up to around 45-50 degrees. Traces of burning, which caused distortion and warping particularly in the middle part of the blade, while the tip and lower socket appear to be rather unaffected. Therefore, the spearhead was probably bent before heating.

Accession number: A.1964.41.s

Classification: Spearhead

Length: 158 mm

Width: 44 mm

Diameter socket (external): -

Weight: 112 g

Description: Spearhead with part of socket missing.

Significant traces of burning, which caused distortion and warping particularly at the socket and blade edges. The spearhead blade is bowed about 10 degrees towards the tip. The socket is completely flattened.

Accession number: A.1964.41.t

Classification: Spearhead

Length: 167 mm (tip fragment: 59 mm, blade fragment: 65 mm, socket fragment: 52 mm)

Width: 46 mm

Diameter socket (external): 24 mm

Weight: 99 g (tip fragment: 23 g, blade fragment: 43 g; socket fragment: 31 g)

Description: Complete spearhead in three refitting pieces.

Traces of burning, which caused distortion and warping, therefore the fragments do not fit well together. The blade edges are bowed and curled. The spearhead is bent to around 30-45 degrees along the blade. The breaks occurred in antiquity and it appears likely that the artefact was heated and then fragmented.

Accession number: A.1964.41.u

Classification: Spearhead

Length: -

Width: -

Diameter socket (external): -

Description: Three very small fragments of spearheads (not illustrated).

Accession number: A.1964.41.v

Classification: Spearhead

Length: 72 mm

Width: 32 mm

Diameter socket (external): -

Weight: 52 g

Description: Socket of spearhead with concentric decoration of at least four ribs around the socket mouth.

Significant traces of burning, which caused distortion and warping. The socket has collapsed and melted on side.

Accession number: A.1964.41.w

Classification: Spearhead

Length: 66 mm (a/b: 66 mm, c: 64 mm, d: 61 mm)

Width: 30 mm (a/b: 19 mm, c: 20 mm, d: 30 mm)

Diameter socket (external): -

Weight: 43 g (a/b: 11 g, c: 15 g, d: 17 g)

Description: Four fragments of spearhead socket, two of which are refitting.

The fractures are probably the result of heated fragmentation.

Accession number: A.1964.41.x

Classification: Spearhead

Length: 90 mm

Width: 31 mm

Diameter socket (external): 32 mm

Weight: 62 g

Description: Socket of spearhead.

Traces of burning, which caused distortion and warping. Small chisel mark on one side.

Accession number: A.1964.41.y

Classification: Spearhead

Length: 106 mm

Width: 48 mm

Diameter socket (external): -

Weight: 63 g

Description: Spearhead with socket missing.

The spearhead was broken across the blade-socket junction with some material loss up the midrib. A slight bowing of one blade edge in two places may be use-related.

Accession number: A.1964.41.z

Classification: Spearhead

Length: 132 mm (blade fragment: 112 mm, socket fragment: 26 mm)

Width: 51 mm

Diameter socket (external): -

Weight: 106 g

Description: Spearhead in two pieces with socket largely missing.

The spearhead was broken across the blade-socket junction. The blade edge is slightly bowed on one side and curled on the other, presumably related to burning, though the rest of the spearhead does not indicate signs of intensive heating.

Accession number: A.1991.1

Classification: Spearhead

Length: 136 mm

Width: 51 mm

Diameter socket (external): -

Weight: 126 g

Description: Spearhead with socket missing.

The spearhead was broken across the blade-socket junction with deformation suggesting possible hammer blows. Significant traces of burning, which caused distortion and warping. The blade wings are fragmented and bowed in place, which is partly linked to heat deformation and partly material loss caused by corrosion.

Accession number: A.2013.1

Classification: Spearhead

Length: 62 mm

Width: 41 mm

Diameter socket (external): -

Weight: 34 g

Description: Socket of spearhead.

Significant traces of burning, which caused distortion and warping.